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WRL News

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The European Nuclear Disarmament Movement

By Scott Abbott

Nineteen-eighty has been an extraordinary year for the peace movements of western Europe. Over the last year there has been a resurgence of concern about the mounting prospects of nuclear war, causing hundreds of thousands of people to take to the streets all over Europe in an effort to move their governments away from the politics of escalating militarism.

It is of course no mystery, at least to Europeans, why disarmament and peace are once again major issues of concern. For Europeans the threat of nuclear war is very real—and growing.

By now most people know that the Pentagon is preparing Europe for a new generation of U.S. nuclear missiles and at the same time asking all NATO governments to increase their own defense spending by 3% annually in real terms. By 1983, the Pentagon plans on beginning the basing of 464 cruise missiles around Europe as well as stationing 108 Pershing II missiles in West Germany. These new missile systems will, for the first time, give the U.S. the capability of striking the heart of the USSR using European based nuclear weapons. This obviously escalates the tensions between East and West and also makes all of Europe more of a nuclear target.

The plain fact is that many Europeans are beginning to feel very uncomfortable with the present policies of military security that are supposed to protect them. Many Europeans feel they are caught in the middle between two superpowers who might someday use Europe as a possible "military testing-ground for nuclear war. People all over Europe are beginning to realize that they better get organized and begin to promote new policies that will take them away from the brink of nuclear confrontation.

Fortunately, new policies and new peace campaigns are being organized within European countries and throughout Europe as a whole. So far, the best examples of the growing influence of European peace movements can be found in the Netherlands, Belgium, and in Great Britain.

Many will remember that it was the internal political pressures within the Netherlands and Belgium that caused the governments of those countries to announce early last year at a NATO alliance meeting that both countries were postponing their decision of accepting new U.S. cruise missiles on their territories. A further eroding of support for cruise missiles could occur in the Netherlands this coming May if the peace movement there is successful in influencing the general elections.

The British peace movement has also been a very effective political force, having grown phenomenally over the last year. The best example of this growth can be seen in the re-emergence of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) as a major political force in Britain. Over the last year CND's membership has more than doubled and there are now over 500 groups throughout Britain affiliated with the campaign. This past October CND organized a demonstration that overflowed London's Trafalgar Square with over 70,000 people demanding unilateral nuclear disarmament for Britain.

The massive pressure for nuclear disarmament has been so great that the British Labour party has recently felt it necessary to come out in support of unilateral nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, Labour party support is always subject to change, especially since the party itself is so seriously divided on many issues. However, the Labour party is on record at the present time as supporting the removal of all nuclear weapons from British soil including the 160 U.S. cruise missiles now destined for Britain. The

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Scott Abbott is the WRL intern to the War Resisters International office in London.

RALPH DIGIA: Twenty-Five Years on the WRL Staff

By Sybil Claiborne

To work all your life for peace in a country that is always preparing for war requires special qualities—strength, courage, hope and above all stubbornness, for without that the struggle often seems too repetitive and the victories too few. Among the stubborn lifelong peacemakers is Ralph DiGia who is celebrating his twenty-fifth year on staff at the War Resisters League. Celebrating is the word for after all these years of long days, low pay, endless meetings, mailings, etc., Ralph can still say, "I consider myself lucky to be working here."

We sit in the work room on broken chairs. Trucks thunder by, the building shakes, people poke their heads in and then withdraw. I ask Ralph how it all began.

"My political life started early. My father took me to meetings and demonstrations when I was a kid. He was a barber from Italy who opposed Mussolini. We went to hear Clarence Darrow and Norman Thomas. I remember going to a demonstration for Sacco and Venzetti. Then when I was at City College the students were circulating the Oxford pledge against war."

But by the time Ralph was called up for induction in 1942, after his CO claim was turned down, the forces of peace had all but disappeared and his decision to refuse was a private and lonely act. Even his anti-fascist father pleaded with him to go in the army, fearing that he would ruin his whole life if he went to prison. Ralph almost gave in. But when the time came, "I couldn't give up what I believed."

"The day I went to the induction center and told them I wasn't going, I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I went down to the D.A.'s office to turn myself in. The D.A. told me to get myself a lawyer. He sent me to an organization that could provide

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WRL Locals & Regional Offices

By Grace Hedemann

There are four new WRL Locals... **Pittsburgh WRL, Dallas WRL, Norwich WRL,** and **Birmingham WRL.**

A number of the WRL Locals worked with CARD Chapters on January anti-draft activities. Some of these activities included candlelight vigils in Birmingham and Dallas; on-going counseling in northern Vermont, St. Louis, Dallas, Durham, and San Francisco; a blood splattered draft card burning in Pittsburgh; pickets and leafleting inside/outside post offices around the country; and a singout in Chicago. **WRL/SE** co-sponsored, with the local National Lawyers Guild chaper, a training conference for lawyers on how to defend Selective Service violators. WRL members did interviews, and even received front page coverage on their activities in some areas.

Public forums, teach-ins, and alternative courses have been the mainstay of a number of groups. **Morgantown WRL** and **Foothills WRL** sponsor monthly forums. **Foothills WRL** recently sponsored (with the local CALC chapter) a talk by Bishop George Evans of the Denver Archdiocese on "The Christian Responsibility to Peace and Social Justice." In addition **Foothills WRL** has organized a course at Colorado State University on "Peace through Social Justice." The classes will include the history of pacifism, violence against women, and repression in Latin America, among others.

Lamoille Peace Coalition/WRL has sponsored many informational evenings at Johnson State College with films, slide shows, and speakers. **Norwich WRL** will be co-sponsoring an event at Connecticut College with a safe energy group. Joanne Sheehan, Norwich WRL and WRL National Committee member, spoke to a Hartford, Connecticut community group on nuclear weapons. **Norwich WRL** has written a "fact sheet" on the Trident submarine. **Atlanta WRL** had two discussion sessions on the WRL/West's "A Study Kit for Nonviolent Action." Teach-ins on El Salvador have been sponsored by **WRL/SE, New Brunswick WRL,** and **Birmingham WRL. Atlanta WRL** joined feminist groups and a local El Salvador coalition on International Women's Day for an all day event.

War tax resistance is an important part of WRL Locals' activities. Many Atlanta WRLers participated in the Atlanta Tax Conversion Group workshop, and will join the April 15th demonstration at IRS. **Foothills WRL** organized a workshop with Bill Durland from the Center of Law and Pacifism on tax refusal. **Pittsburgh WRL** sponsored a workshop with Steve Gulick, Philadelphia WRL/WTR and WRL National Committee member, on tax resistance. **Dallas WRL** considers tax resistance a priority. **New York City WRL** will sponsor a week of picketing, and leafleting inside IRS as well as a rally on April 15th.

Some Locals have had activities directed at the "moral majority" and the "new right." The **Birmingham WRL** participated in a picket line and demonstration at the Birmingham/Jefferson County Civic Center which took place outside a regional "National Affairs Briefing" of the Religious Roundtable, a "new right" group. **Dallas WRL** demonstrated at a meeting of the "moral majority." **WRL/SE** is a key organizer in a North Carolina coalition planning a statewide conference on the "new right." Dave Dellinger, WRL Executive Committee member, will be speaking at that conference.

On the issue of racism, the southern Locals have taken the lead. **Birmingham WRL** participated in a Tuscaloosa march protesting the verdict of the Greenboro's murders by the Klan against the Communist Workers Party members. **WRL/SE** co-sponsored an Inauguration Day march in Washington, D.C., to protest Klan/Nazi violence, and government complicity and repression. **WRL/SE** was also one of the Anti-Klan

Grace Hedemann is on the WRL national staff.

WRL Local Groups

NATIONAL OFFICE, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012 (212-228-0450).

REGIONAL OFFICES

WRL/Southeast, 604 West Chapel Hill Street, Durham, NC 27701 (919-682-6374).
WRL/West, 85 Carl Street, San Francisco, CA 94117 (415-731-1220).

LOCAL OFFICES

Albuquerque WRL, 201 Pine S.E., Albuquerque, NM 87106 (505-243-6169).
Atlanta WRL, 1225 Cameron Court N.W., Atlanta, GA 30306.
Dallas WRL, 2710 Woodmere, Dallas, TX 75233 (214-337-5885).
Detroit WRL, 1542 W. Alexandrine, Detroit, MI 48208 (313-833-3197).
Direct Action Committee/WRL, 413 S.E. 1st #C, Evansville, IN 47713.
Foothills WRL, 3024 Ross Drive #A-4, Ft. Collins, CO 80521 (303-482-9641; 482-0369).
Hawaii WRL/catholic Action, 1918 University Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822 (808-949-1210).
Inland Empire WRL, 1336 North Wall Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92494 (714-889-3170).
Lamoille Peace Coalition/WRL, Sophie Sollberger, Johnson State College, Johnson Vt. 05656 (802-635-7349).
Monmouth County WRL, P.O. Box 131, Fair Haven, NJ 07701 (201-899-4383; 747-0566).
Morgantown WRL, 912½ Monogahlea Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505 (304-292-9678).
Muncie/Ball State WRL, P.O. Box 401, Student Center, Muncie, IN 47306 (371-289-6710).
New Brunswick WRL, 443 Cedar Grove Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873 (201-356-6083).
New Paltz WRL, 64 Forest Glen Road, New Paltz, NY 12561 (914-255-8627).
New York City WRL, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012.
Norwich WRL, P.O. Box 1093, Norwich, CT 06360 (203-889-5337).
Oak Park WRL, 645 North Taylor, Oak Park, IL 60302 (312-386-0192).
Ozark Area WRL, 626 East Normal, Springfield, MO 65807 (471-864-4078).
Philadelphia WRL/WTR, 2208 South Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146 (215-545-4626).
Pittsburgh WRL, 5899 Bartlett Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 (412-422-0377).
Rochester WRL, 713 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607 (716-244-7191; 473-2949).
St. Louis WRL, 962 Warder, St. Louis, MO 63130 (314-726-4662).
Southern California WRL, 866¼ E. Kensington Road, Los Angeles, CA 90026 (213-629-2998).

Network Conference sponsors. Dannia Southerland, WRL/SE staff, did a workshop at the conference on feminist responses to the Klan and racism. **Atlanta WRL** members leafleted at the Martin Luther King Birthday march. Then on January 20 as part of the Peace Action Group, WRL members participated in a Reagan Funeral March. The march symbolized mourning over the death of civil rights, gay rights, and so forth. News coverage was excellent.

Birmingham WRL became the first group in 33 years to picket the Birmingham Veterans Day Parade on November 11th. WRLers held signs as top U.S. military establishment brass entered the municipal auditorium. The group felt exhilarated by the experience.

Pittsburgh WRL formed an Economic Conversion Study group which meets once a month. Hopes are high to build alliances with labor, religious, and community groups. The Local participated in the presence at the Rockwell International Stockholders' Meeting.

WRL/West had a great fundraiser attended by 600 people entitled "A Reagan Inaugural Ball (and succession party)." They have also been participating in local and national organizing around the Nuclear Freeze and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Campaigns. **WRL/West** has begun work on the WRL National Conference to be held in Occidental, California the last weekend in August. Helen Michalowski, WRL/West staff, resigns April 1st after almost three years. She is responsible for developing the Feminism and Nonviolence, and the Draft/Counter-Recruitment Programs. Helen will continue to work closely with WRL.

WRL/SE Women & Militarism Committee is producing a special issue of the WRL/SE Regional Newsletter on women and militarism. The Committee is also preparing to do speaking and outreach on the links between sexism and militarism. Dannia Southerland made a short tour through the Southeast during late February.

If you would like to receive the **WRL/West** or **WRL/SE** Newsletters, send a contribution with a request to their office. **Lamoille Peace Coalition/WRL** urges WRL members visiting northern Vermont (or individuals/groups with news to share) to contact Wendy Scott, Box 43, Johnson, VT 05656 (802-635-2618).

GE Boycott

A boycott has been called of all General Electric consumer products until GE "gets out of the nuclear business."

GE is active in nearly every phase of the nuclear industry: uranium mining and milling, fuel rod and reactor fabrication, waste storage, and production of nuclear weapons components.

This boycott has been called by C.A.R.E. (Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment, 3960 Winding Way, Cincinnatti, OH 45229) for those who wish further information.

National Anti-Klan Network Conference

By Kathy Engel

"We are in a national emergency." Those were Anne Braden's words, opening the second National Anti-Klan Network (NAKN) Conference on January 30th at Howard University. "The people's rights movement must mount a new offensive against racism," Ms. Braden of the Southern Organizing Committee for Social and Economic Justice, went on to say. "Why focus on the Klan, and not the subtle forms of racism? Because the Klan is the most extreme expression of the disease, reaching into high places."

About 500 individuals and representatives from church, student, social justice, peace, anti-racist and many other social change groups gathered to talk, listen, share ideas and information and start mapping out plans for a "spring offensive" against the racist attacks terrorizing people in all parts of this country.

"The Klan couldn't have this resurgence if it wasn't protected and even encouraged by the government," Ann Braden continued. Later on in the conference, Arthur Kinoy, in his overview speech, discussed the simultaneous rise of the Klan and other right-wing groups with the wave of repressive legislation being introduced into Congress. He spoke of the attempts to repeal the Voting Rights Act of 1965, end Affirmative Action, ammend the minimum wage and illegalize aortion, as all creating a climate eerily reminiscent of that in 1877—repression of the union and workers' movement and attacks on all groups of oppressed people.

Reports from regional groups painted a terrifying picture of recist violence in communities across the country. The reports also gave the sense that a strong network of anti-racist organizing is taking hold—a real foundation for the spring campaign. A spring program was adopted during the conference and work strategies were discussed in the workshops.

"The political purpose of the spring offensive is to press forward the building of a powerful and broad mass movement against the KKK throughout the country," states the Executive Committee. "We can force some concessions from this government—and by doing so possibly save some lives. This is a life-and-death issue."

The demands of the offensive are: 1. That the Reagan Administration and all levels of government declare a national state of emergency concerning the rise of the Klan and Racist violence; 2. That all federal, state and local governments enforce existing laws (like murder and assault) and especially enforce and strengthen the existing "Anti-Klan Statutes" which have been on the books since Reconstruction and were strengthened in the 1960's. A third demand was added during the plenary: To stop the repeal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The program has three basic parts. A national lobby day will be called in Washington, D.C. This is not a lobby in the traditional sense of "behind-the-scenes-manipulation," but a mass people's lobby, a powerful presence showing that there is a force working against racism in this country, determined to fight for justice. This day will be a kick-off for a week of anti-Klan/anti-racist activities in local areas throughout the country, including a range of events aimed at responding to the particular struggles in a given community. The third focus is around hearings on the Klan and racist violence held by the House sub-committee on crimes, chaired by John Connyers. The NAKN will insist that these hearings take place throughout the country, and that they take testimony from actual victims. The goal is to organize mass mobilizations around these hearings, which provide a natural focal point for attention.

At this time it is essential that work begin in task forces and local groups, to build a broad-based, vital and well organized spring offensive. It is urgent that we, in the WRL, take on this work as an integral part of our program. We must actively, in our literature and speaking, link the struggles against militarism and racism. We can possibly, and must, save some lives. More than some.

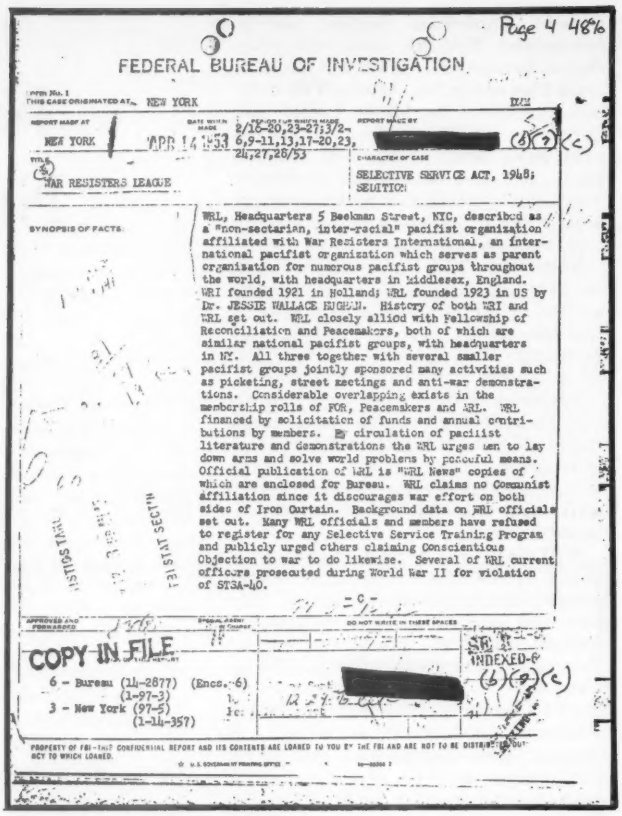
For further information contact the National Anti-Klan Network, 348 Convent Avenue, New York, New York 10031. (212) 926-5757.

Kathy Engel is on the WRL Executive Committee

TOP SECRET:

The WRL FBI File

By Maris Cakars



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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FBI/DOJ

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK

REPORT MADE AT: NEW YORK — DATE WHEN MADE: APR 14 1953 — PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 2/18-20,23-27;3/2-6,9-11,13,17-20,23,24,27,28/53 — REPORT MADE BY: [redacted] (b)(7)(c)

TITLE: WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

CHARACTER OF CASE: SELECTIVE SERVICE ACT, 1948; SEDITION

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

WRL, Headquarters 5 Beekman Street, NYC, described as a "non-sectarian, inter-racial" pacifist organization affiliated with War Resisters International, an international pacifist organization which serves as parent organization for numerous pacifist groups throughout the world, with headquarters in Middlesex, England. WRI founded 1921 in Holland; WRL founded 1923 in US by Dr. JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN. History of both WRI and WRL set out. WRL closely allied with Fellowship of Reconciliation and Peacemakers, both of which are similar national pacifist groups, with headquarters in NY. All three together with several smaller pacifist groups jointly sponsored many activities such as picketing, street meetings and anti-war demonstrations. Considerable overlapping exists in the membership rolls of FOR, Peacemakers and WRL. WRL financed by solicitation of funds and annual contributions by members. By circulation of pacifist literature and demonstrations the WRL urges men to lay down arms and solve world problems by peaceful means. Official publication of WRI is "WRL News" copies of which are enclosed for Bureau. WRL claims no Communist affiliation since it discourages war effort on both sides of Iron Curtain. Background data on WRL officials set out. Many WRL officials and members have refused to register for any Selective Service Training Program and publicly urged others claiming Conscientious Objection to war to do likewise. Several of WRL current officers prosecuted during World War II for violation of STSA-40.

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A sample page from the WRL file.

"4 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

____ Deleted under exemption(s) b7c, b7d with no segregable material for release to you."

That's how the WRL's FBI files—or the portion that has been released to the League—begins.

The next of the more than 3,000 pages made available is a letter to Director Hoover from special Agent in Charge in New York, P.E. Foxworth, describing a WRI election mailing that seems to indicate to agent Foxworth that "the WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE at 171 West 12th Street, New York City, is acting as an agent for the WAR RESISTERS INTERNATIONAL of Enfield, Middlesex, England, within the meaning of the Registration Act." The letter is dated August 14, 1939 and on October 12 of the same year John Edgar Hoover, Director, wrote to "My dear Mr. Secretary" (of State) requesting he "be advised whether the War Resisters League...is registered with the State Department as an agent of a foreign principal."

Maris Cakars is on the Executive Committee of the WRL.

In October 1940 the Secretary of State presented "his compliments to the Honorable the Attorney General" and informed him that the WRL had not registered, but that, "unless the Federal Bureau of Investigation has reason, from the information in its possession...the Department would not be disposed to suggest any further investigation."

With that, a three-way struggle between the Director, the New York office and the Attorney General commenced. Special Agent Foxworth proved himself an unenthusiastic supporter of Hoover's ambition to put the League out of business, and so did the Justice Department. In the early days Hoover is a central figure in these files as he writes threatening memo after threatening memo to the New York Office to gather up back issues of the *Conscientious Objector* and *War Resistance* and make a case of any sort. But it took until 1943 for the New York office to make its report, and then it blamed the delay on the fact that the *Conscientious Objector* appeared irregularly. By this time agent Foxworth had been replaced. WRL's Executive Secretary Abe Kaufman had told all to the FBI, including the size of the mailing list (8,830 names), and the Assistant Attorney General still found no reason to prosecute for an alleged violation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Instead, he suggested to Hoover that he look for sedition or evasion of Selective Service.

The documents from the 1940's reveal J. Edgar Hoover unsuccessfully trying to pin some sort of rap—any sort of rap—on WRL. Despite all of the resources of the FBI, he failed—yet echoes of that effort can be found until the end of his stewardship of the FBI.

The following decades of documents reveal that the Bureau, with all of its Airtels, Butels and LHM's (Air Teletypes, Bureau Teletypes and Letterhead Memoranda) had no idea of what we were really about. While they were trying to fit us into a mold of theirs, they were doing a very poor job of finding out what our real subversive secrets were. Their "Confidential" information is all the kind of thing we were trying to broadcast as widely as possible: for example, when the busses were leaving for Washington and from where.

If there was an informer in our inner circles he or she was reporting to a different FBI than the one we find in these documents. Their confidential source reveals, for example, that the WRL is going to move from 5 Beekman St., to 339 Lafayette St. The source reports that fund-raising events are being held to facilitate the move. The source reports that the move is complete. *You* could

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Hostages, Terrorism, and the New Cold War

By David McReynolds

When is a hostage not a hostage? When we are holding them. When is terrorism not terrorism? When we are committing the terrorism. Orwell warned us how words would twist and change in the mouths of our leaders, until war is peace and slavery is freedom.

The 52 hostages are now home. They should never have been held by the Iranian militants. We join in rejoicing that they are free, as we rejoiced (though the President, and the media did not) when the last of the Wilmington Ten were freed from prison. We do, however, have a real problem with the way the media treated the event.

First, the media managed from the beginning to skip over *why* the hostages had been taken, and failed to pursue with vigor the role of Rockefeller and Kissinger in getting Carter to admit the late Shah of Iran to this country—despite vigorous warnings from our own embassy in Iran that such action would carry with it extreme risks of retaliation. The media never explored our American role in Iran in the past 25 years—it was as if one day all was well and the next day some young Iranian militants, without cause, seized innocent Americans. Things do not happen, generally, without a cause.

Second, the hostages themselves, were innocent but not heroic. They had not volunteered to be taken hostage, and once they had been taken they had little choice but to remain hostages. They were, for the most part, quite ordinary people caught up by events far outside their control. Victims, yes. Heroes, no. They suffered, yes, but in a world where terrible things do happen the hostages were rather fortunate to have been captured by a government more civilized (for all its faults) that some of those with which we are allied. They might, after all, have been taken hostage by El Salvador in which case they would now be dead. The hostages were not tortured and they were not injured. Their seizure was an outrage—though on balance not quite so outrageous as the killings of Iranian students with American bullets which preceded the hostage situation.

David McReynolds is a WRL National staff member.

But America needs heroes just now. And thus the hostages, without their consent, became heroes. They and their families were mercilessly subjected to TV interviews, just as the entire American public had been compelled to follow the hostage crisis, day by day. The *New York Times* forgot for days on end that it had any standards of journalism. Let us compare the return of the hostages—men and women caught up by accident, by errors in Washington, and held over a year without harm—with the return of the veterans of the Vietnam War. That war stank in the nostrils of America by the time it ended. It had failed to capture the hearts and minds of the American people. And so the poor guys who had been sent there by Nixon, Johnson, Kennedy, Kissinger and the corporations, the men who had done the fighting and killing and dying, who had lost friends, and parts of their own bodies, and sometimes lost their minds, they returned with no brass bands, no ceremony on the White House lawn, and no ticker tape parade.

I am not urging that the war veterans should have had a ticker tape parade (though they certainly merited jobs, at the very least.) But notice how heroes are created by the media.

Look back and one realizes that if the hostages were important to the militant students, they were much more important to our own Establishment. The hostages made it possible to forget our role in Iran. In one stroke the militants made it possible for Americans to stop questioning American policy and unite to condemn the policy of the militants. And in the end the return of the hostages made it possible for us to strike a very patriotic posture, pledging "never again."

There are two other lessons buried in the hostage crisis. One is to ask whether the reason Americans cared about the 52 so deeply was because they were not 52,000,000. If one points out that *all* the planet is hostage to the madness of nuclear war, that is such a heavy point we can't get a grip on it. But if we point to 52 specific human beings, I think it is easier to be concerned. Perhaps in that sense we should not urge people to worry about *all* those who will die in war, but to think of five or ten people they know and love, and to realize they *are* hostage to the war drive. The other lesson is a reminder that for all the might and money of the CIA and the KGB, we live in a world where very small groups of people can bring us to the risk of war, to the edge of darkness. How foolish to think that we can dare entrust our futures to the men in Moscow and Washington, counting on their ultimate rationality, when not only do I find no firm evidence they *are* rational, but whatever they might hope to achieve can so easily be upset by events in small nations.

I turn now to a look at the issue of terrorism, raised by our new Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, one-time errand boy for Henry Kissinger, then briefly "President-behind-the-scenes" while Nixon struggled with Watergate, then the head of NATO, and finally, just before returning to Washington, President of one of our largest corporations. Haig has warned the Russians not to supply the "terrorists" in El Salvador with weapons. This is truly Orwellian doublethink. Most of the terror in El Salvador is coming from the government *we* support. I heard no words from Reagan when Israel shipped in arms to General Somoza in the last days of the Nicaraguan dictatorship. Is it because Israel is our ally that it is OK for her to ship arms to a Central American dictatorship?

Terrorism. That means to murder the Archbishop of El Salvador. Reagan was not at his funeral, nor Carter. Terrorism. That means the murder of four Catholic missionaries in El Salvador. Let us contrast El Salvador with Poland. War Resisters League has cabled Moscow to oppose any possible Soviet military action against the Polish people and the Polish working class from orgnized and free expression of its views through trade unions of their choice. If the Cardinal in Poland were to be assassinated by KGB agents, or the leadership of Solidarity machine-gunned as they sat together in a meeting one can easily imagine the orchestrated outrage of Reagan and Haig. Yet this is what has happened in El Salvador, and not because of Soviet weapons, but because of *our weapons*. War Resisters League opposes *all* terrorism. That includes opposing acts of torture, violence, and inhumanity by the PLO, by Puerto Ricans seeking independence, by Iranian students. But our opposition to terrorism begins *here, with our government*.

I close with an ominous note. Reagan has given a certain legitimacy now to terrorism in the streets of Washington. He has resumed certain official links with the government of Chile, links that had been suspended by Carter when Chile refused to extradite military officers for trial in Washington, D.C. for the assassination on the streets of Washington of Orlando Letelier and Ronnie Moffet. By doing so, he gave an official stamp of approval on that murder. Terrorism always has an official residence. In our country it is the White House.

RALPH DIGIA: Twenty-Five Years on the WRL Staff

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help." That was Ralph's first encounter with the War Resisters League.

At his trial, he was found guilty and the case was appealed as part of a class-action suit on behalf of non-religious CO's that eventually went before the Supreme Court. During this waiting time Ralph appealed to President Roosevelt. He wrote, "War is probably the greatest of all human calamities...the concentration of all the horror, crimes and suffering of which human nature is capable...As long as I can remember I have been opposed to war. It was easy then, there was peace. Now we are at war and my opposition remains unchanged."

The Court found against the CO's and Ralph started a three-year sentence at Danbury in the winter of 1942. "There were a lot of resisters inside. I met Jim Peck there and we started holding classes in sociology. We demanded that they desegregate the dining room facilities and when we refused to work they isolated us. We were allowed out only a half hour every day."

The dining room was ultimately desegregated but having earned a reputation as a troublemaker, Ralph was transferred to Lewisburg, a higher security prison to finish out his sentence. He met more resisters there, among them David Dellinger, and continued to make trouble for the authorities.

Young men faced with the possibility of prison during the Vietnam War often asked Ralph what it was like to spend years in jail. "I was able to tell them it isn't the end of the world. There's a lot of things you can do to help others. It's an experience, you learn what society is all about. And when it comes to jail or the army, it is not such a difficult choice to make."

He was released in June 1945, a couple of months before the war ended. He got married, found a job as an accountant despite his record and in 1948, moved out to Glen Gardens, N.J. to start a commune with other resisters and their wives. "The idea was to develop a community that would support us in our political work. Many men who might have refused induction during the war were unable to do so because they had families to support." The experiment lasted four years for him and around that time his marriage also ended.

In the summer of 1951, he went on a peace mission to Europe with David Dellinger, Bill Sutherland and Art Emory. "It was a Peacemakers project. We were going to bicycle from Paris to Moscow, giving out leaflets saying we were four Americans who had been imprisoned and asking people to lay down their arms and take up the nonviolent struggle. In Paris we applied to the German government for a visa and we also went to the Soviet consulate. They kept saying 'We'll see.' When we were refused a visa to Germany we bicycled to Strasbourg and camped at the Rhine and fasted for a week. We got a lot of publicity, four American peacemakers. People came to the tent to find out what we were doing.

"We still wanted to go to the Soviet Union so we took a train to Vienna and tried to get the authorities there to give us permits. We even cabled Stalin, 'Let us in.'

"Finally we decided to buy tickets to the British zone but get off at the Soviet zone where we started handing out leaflets to soldiers and civilians and saying, *'Mir, Mir,'* (peace, peace). Then we got back on the train and returned to Vienna. Everybody said it couldn't be done and that we had been lucky we weren't detained or worse."

From 1955, when he started on staff at the WRL, until now, Ralph's history is also the history of the pacifist movement. He has been at the center of all the major events, organizing, leafleting, marching, fasting, going to jail. In the mid-fifties, he was among a handful of people arrested for refusing to take shelter during an air raid drill. By 1962, when drills and testing stopped, their ranks had swelled to the thousands.

In the early sixties, people from the north began to go south to support the growing Civil Rights movement. Ralph was one of them. He was jailed in Albany, Georgia, with other protestors, and they went on a 26-day fast to protest their imprisonment.

Then came the widening war in Vietnam, the growing opposition to that war, and the great outpourings of people at Whitehall, Sheep's Meadow, the Pentagon, May Day, each action swelling the peace ranks until the war was finally at an end.

But the war against people, against human hopes never really ends. When asked how he feels about the current political climate, Ralph said, "Well, I'm not really optimistic. There are so many forces against what we're trying to do. Still you can't predict things. You have to keep doing this or nothing will ever get better. I feel sad that we might go down. But whenever I meet young people I say to myself, well it's continuing, it's good. In the past, when I met Annie Upshaw or A.J. Muste or Dorothy Day I thought, they're still at it. I hope I can make people feel that same way."

I asked Ralph what was the high spot of his years as an activist. He had to think

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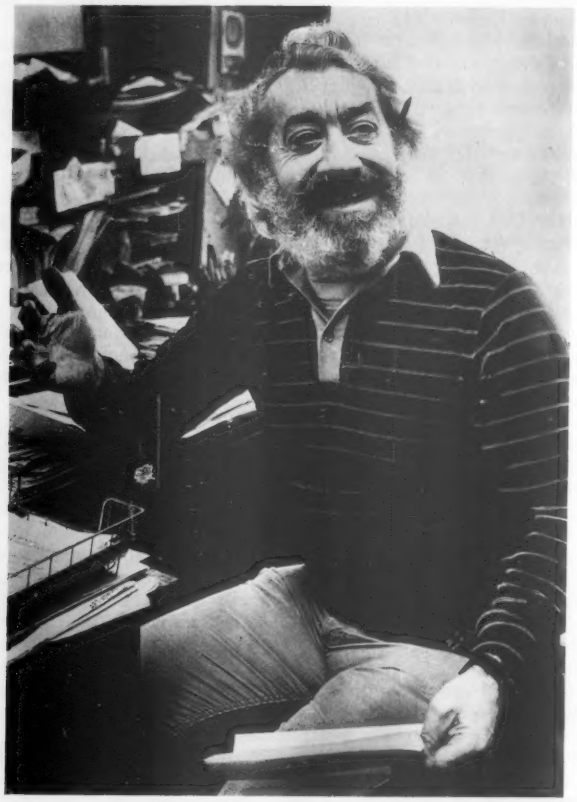

Ralph DiGia

Lanza del Vasto Dies

By Robert Ellsberg

Lanza del Vasto, founder of the Community of the Ark, and one of the great teachers of nonviolence, died in Spain on January 5, at the age of 79.

He was born in Italy of a noble family in 1901. After studying philosophy and wandering around the world, without much satisfaction in either, he travelled to India in 1936. There he encountered Gandhi in a meeting that was to determine the course of his life. He lived in Gandhi's ashram long enough to absorb the basic features of his thought and then returned to Europe determined to make these ideas known in the West.

Gandhi gave him a new name: Shantidas, "Servant of Peace." He was aptly named. for the next 40 years, through words and deeds and a way of living, he devoted himself to the service of peace and the resistance to violence in all its personal and institutional forms. He was joined in his efforts by a community of followers whom he called the Ark, after Noah's vessel. Indeed, with his clothes of handspun wool and his long white beard, he resembled more an Old Testament prophet or patriarch than any conventional form of politician.

One of his constant themes was the need to break the "chains of legitimate violence"—for in every conflict there are two sides, each of which sees its own violence as a legitimate defense against the threat, provocation, or injury inflicted by the other side. Shantidas challenged such logic. Violence does not correct a wrong, he said; it doubles it. He called on those who would resist the violence in others or in an institution to begin by uprooting the violence within themselves and withdrawing from a way of life that benefits from the exploitation of others.

His Community of the Ark, based in Southern France, is an effort to apply nonviolence to every aspect of life. The community is self supporting. Like Gandhi's followers, the members spin their own wool, make their own clothes, raise their own food—all without the help of electricity or modern machines. For Shantidas nonviolence was "a way of acting that derived from a way of being." This did not mean he abjured actions. He organized countless prominent campaigns in protest of war, in support of the rights of conscience and the relief of human suffering. These campaigns often included extended fasts, some as long as 20 and 40 days.

He and his companions protested the use of torture during the Algerian war. When they discovered that concentration camps had been established for the detention of "suspect" Algerians they went to the camps and insisted on being detained themselves. "Of course they threw us out," he recalled. "They insisted the camps were only for suspicious persons. 'Why,' we asked, 'should we not be considered suspicious?' They said they weren't concerned with people who were voluntarily suspicious."

From Gandhi, Shantidas had learned the value of focusing a nonviolent campaign on a precise, limited aim that somehow had the power of undermining the logic or method of a larger wrong. Using startling and often theatrical means he sought to undermine the adversary's image of himself, and to defy the opponent's expectation that force will be resisted by force. Truth and justice, he said, have no need of force of arms. They have a force of their own.

During their successful campaign for recognition of the right of conscientious objection in France, a resister from the Ark would announce his intention to submit to arrest at some particular public place. When the police would arrive to arrest him they would find a dozen men chained together all insisting that they were the man the police were looking for.

The peasants of the Larzac turned to Shantidas for direction early on in their campaign to prevent the military from appropriating their land. That campaign has borne a number of features typical of Shantidas' style—particularly his instinct for the dramatic, and his insistence that every nonviolent campaign include a positive affirmation as well as resistance to evil. In one instance the farmers drove their sheep to Paris and grazed them under the Eiffel Tower. One summer they invited 100,000 people from all over France to help them harvest wheat planted on the contested fields, later to donate the entire harvest to the famine stricken people of the Sahel.

It was a life of Peace and Strength and Joy—the words that became the motto of the Ark. If few are called to imitate the rigorous consistency of Lanza del Vasto's way of life there must be even fewer who can deny the truth that lay behind it—in his words, that "the future must be a future of nonviolence, or else there will be no future."

Lanza del Vasto's books in English include *Warriors of Peace,* a study of the theory and practice of nonviolence, and *Return to the Source,* the story of his trip to India and his meeting with Gandhi.

Robert Ellsberg is a former member of the WRL Executive Committee.

Ralph DiGia *Continued from page 6*

about that. Finally he said, "The fasts. The 26-day fast at Albany, Georgia and the 15-day fast at Lewisburg. They used to send in a guard, a big fat man with food. He'd try to get us to eat. 'One of these days we'll cook him,' we told each other.

"When I was fasting I'd find myself thinking about food, about spinach that I'd thrown away and I vowed I'd never waste another scrap of food. Hunger has that effect on you. Yet fasting isn't that hard. It's a commitment. When you really want something, it's amazing what your body can do."

When he talks about his personal life he feels lucky. He met Karin and her children and acquired a ready-made family. Then they had Daniel. He had always wanted a child. But because Daniel arrived late in his life, Ralph felt very fragile. He used to worry, each time he crossed a street, about staying alive so Daniel would have a father to take care of him. Now Daniel is eight and well on the way to taking care of himself. And Ralph is more relaxed about his son.

In June the WRL is giving a dinner to honor Ralph's 25 years of service to the League. "I wish my parents could be there," he says. "I gave them some anxious moments:—the hunger strikes and going to jail."

What they would see is a good natured, happy, loving man, surrounded by friends, a wife, children, a family, a community of people who share his vision of peace and justice, a man who loves his work and "the happy feeling you get out of doing what you believe in."

Sybil Claiborne is on the WRL Executive Committee.

Resisters Reunion

On Sunday, July 5, 1981 there will be a reunion of WW II former CO inmates of Ashland, KY Federal Correctional Institution. Also invited to attend are the following from any war: CO's from any prison, CPS men, other draft resisters or violaters, AWOL's and only others *vitally* interested. This will be a family gathering and will be at the Tim and Grace Lefever Homestead near York, PA. For more information write RD 1, Box 1508, Spring Grove, PA 17362.

Immigration Service Keeps Tabs on WRL Members

WRL is among the 688 organizations listed in the *Investigators Handbook* of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Though WRL members are not proscribed from immigration or naturalization, the INS comments: "available information indicates that this is a pacifist organization, whose members are militant and take extreme measures to avoid military duty, some of them refusing to register under the Selective Service Law. Members of this organization should be closely questioned to determine attachment to the principles of the Constitution and disposition toward the good order of the United States. They should also be questioned as to whether their objection to military service is based on religious belief in order to determine eligibility. . . to take an oath of allegiance."

European Nuclear Disarmament Movement

Continued from page 1

Labour party does still favour Britain's continued membership in the NATO alliance, something that CND and other peace organizations are trying to change.

Two other important international campaigns have their roots in the British peace movement. The Campaign for European Nucler Disarmament (END), which began in Britain, is promoting the concept of a European nuclear free zone (from Portugal to Poland). So far, virtually every major west European peace organization is involved in some way with the campaign—and there are many supporters in eastern Europe as well. The major strategy of END is to create the public pressure to force all the European governments (East & West) to sit down at a European disarmament conference and seriously discuss the setting up of a European nuclear free zone. Supporters of END point out that a nuclear free zone in Europe would have many advantages such as the loosening of tensions between East and West, the beginning of world-wide disarmament, and the creation of an atmosphere that would assist the growth of democratic movements in eastern Europe.

Another British based campaign is the World Disarmament Campaign (WDC). This campaign has as its objectives the implementation of various proposals contained in the Final Document of the UN's 1978 Special Session on Disarmament. Put simply, these proposals call for the abolition of all weapons of mass destruction followed by a gradual disarmament of conventional weapons, with special emphasis on redirecting money to the Third World in order to abolish poverty worldwide. The WDC hopes to create enough public pressure (through worldwide petitions, demonstrations, etc.) so that the upcoming 1982 Second UN Special Session on Disarmament will take these proposals for disarmament more seriously.

Role of the U.S. Peace Activist

Information concerning the progress of peace movements in Europe makes for more than just good reading. It's vitally important that U.S. peace activists begin to better understand the European situation. While we all will continue to campaign for total disarmament in our own countries, we must also learn to support each other, especially when such a strategy could bring positive results. With the swing to the right in the states, and the returning cool breezes of the cold war, many North Americans would do well to focus some attention and support to the peace movements of Europe. Europeans, living "under the nuclear guns," surrounded by superpower missiles and bases, necessarily see themselves as on the frontlines of the struggle for peace. It might be nice for them to know that the U.S. peace movement recognizes and supports what they are doing.

FBI File

Continued from page 4

have reported all of that if you were on the mailing list of any of the groups involved.

When the agents themselves get involved and make a first-hand observation that 150 attended the fund-raising cocktail party for the move, they get it wrong. That particular party was a bust—not even half of the *sponsors* showed up! This may sound like quibbling over details, but it takes on great significance if you consider that only three months before, the WRL office had been broken into and the entire mailing list stolen. Whether the FBI was responsible or not, this seems a more important development than that we had a cocktail party. We publicized the break-in as vigorously as possible, yet there is no mention of it until fully four years later when a UPI story appeared in the *Washington Post* of August 3, 1973 reporting on an ACLU lawsuit on the matter. At this point the documents are most telling: the next 18 pages are withheld.

When I got the chance to read these pages and pages I thought that I could do a bit of detective work and figure out who the informers were, what secrets were left out of the documents they handed over to us, what the FBI was doing to undermine our work. As a detective I failed miserably. I couldn't find a clue that any Executive Committee member of volunteer envelope stuffer was reporting to the Bureau.

But the political context of these pages is clearer. After World War II the FBI was after the left and was interested in the League only insofar as it was involved with the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, etc. It was looking for traitors and, although the League was found free of Communist influence, nevertheless it remained suspect year after year. Why else were characterizations of the W.E.B. DuBois Club and the Greater N.Y. Press Club (a group that supported the *Daily Worker*) appended to nearly every report about us? Why is a report on the John Reed Clubs part of a memorandum on the planning for the 1965 Assembly of Unrepresented People? Why does the FBI rely on HUAC for characterizations of left groups?

Why, for example, does a report on an anti-war meeting held at a New York church in 1965 with David McReynolds as one of the speakers contain an appendix on the American Socialist Clubs (formerly the Socialist Union of America), which the same report says was disbanded in November of 1959.

And does that kind of deja-vu have anything to do with the Reagan years ahead?

Some answers (as well as the complete text of the last of the documents) will appear in the next issue of the *WRL News*.

Slide Show Available from WRL

ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE is an excellent slide show as an introduction to the philosophy and history of nonviolent action. the show is available for purchase from Larry Gara, the producer. ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE has been used extensively in classrooms and in preparation for nonviolent action. Larry is a history professor at Wilmington College in Ohio, a WW II resister, and a member of the WRL National Committee. The 136 color sildes, plus cassette and script can be purchased for $55. For more information, write Larry Gara, 21 Faculty Place, Wilmington, OH 45177. You can rent the slide show from WRL for $10, plus shipping and insurance. Write WRL, Grace Hedemann, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012.

WRL NEWS

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WRL News (from 1967 on) is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

WRL Statement of Purpose

The War Resisters League affirms that war is a crime against humanity. We therefore are determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive nonviolently for the removal of all the causes of war.

I support this statement and wish to enroll as a member of the War Resisters League.

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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